Nebraska State Energy Sector Partnership

Western Regional Project Team
syNErgy Proposal

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Section 1: Project Overview and Approach

The Western Regional Project Team respectfully submits this proposal to enhance workforce development and provide training opportunities related to the renewable energy sector in the Western region of Nebraska. The renewable energy focus for the Western region is wind technology. Wind may seem to be a simple energy piece, but the Western Regional Project Teams is taking a "seed to plate" approach to wind energy and is considering all employment opportunities in the Wind manufacturing industry.

The Western project will be administered through the local One-Stop Career Center in North Platte, but will serve the entire 12 counties outlined in the SESP Charter's Request for Proposal. Due to the large geographic area covered by the Western project, current partnerships within the local One-Stop Career Centers will aide in the implementation of the Western project. The local Workforce Investment Act (WIA) system and infrastructure will be mirrored for the Western project. The syNErgy case manager will have direct communication with WIA case managers and Career Center staff that will serve as a resource for recruiting potential syNErgy participants.

While the primary focus of the Western project is Wind, the Western Regional Project Team is aware that energy efficiency is an issue for all Nebraskans. For this reason, the Western project has expanded to include energy efficient related trainings. Efforts will be made to partner with other energy related programs, such as the Rural Economic Development Energy Efficiency effort, and Nebraska Energy Office's Weatherization Assistance Program.

Western training opportunities to develop and enhance workforce development in the wind industry include: basic skill "boot camps" for entry level and pre-employment participants; Occupational Skills Trainings which include certificate programs; On the Job Trainings (OJTs) with local employers; Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship programs; Internships, both paid and unpaid, to allow students to gain "real world" experience with employers; and Customized Trainings to meet the specific needs of local employers in the Western area.

The goal of the Western syNErgy project is to expand the wind production and manufacturing employment and training opportunities in the region; and to prepare individuals to meet the demands that are expected to exist in the near future.

Section 2: Work Plan

a. Comprehensive Workforce Services (Outreach, Recruitment, Assessment)

The One-Stop Career Centers and industry employers will be direct assets in the areas of outreach and recruitment. Business Service Representatives (BSRs) located in the local Career Centers will assist with employer outreach, recruitment and engagement for the Western syNErgy project. The syNErgy case manager will be responsible for participant outreach and recruitment. To maximize the potential for recruitment and outreach, various forms of media/communications will be utilized. These techniques include, but are not limited to, electronic transmissions through phone or email, print media to include potential correspondence to adjacent programs, and word of mouth medium between employers and project affiliates.

Current recruitment strategies for WIA and similar programs will be utilized. syNErgy recruitment will extend beyond these strategies to target unemployed individuals who meet the "priority populations" outlined in the SESP Request for Proposal. This will be accomplished by coordinating with other agencies and organizations that currently serve these priority populations. syNErgy will also target high-skilled unemployed workers who closely resemble "incumbent workers". Labor Unions will be a key resource for targeting the high-skilled unemployed population. Industry organizations and NDOL's Rapid Response/Layoff Report will also be utilized to target unemployed individuals with skills related to this project's focus.

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) systems and infrastructure will be mirrored for the Western syNErgy project. WIA style case management, which includes a "wrap-around" service strategy, will be implemented to provide syNErgy participants the intensive case management necessary to successfully complete a training program. All syNErgy participants will be assessed to determine the best and most appropriate service strategy for their training. Unemployed workers will receive the same assessments that the local WIA programs provide, including basic skills assessments for Reading and Math.

b. Training Opportunities

	Small Wind Technician	Wind Turbine Technician	Solar
Energy Focus	Wind Energy	Wind Energy	Energy Efficiency
New or Existing	New	New	New
On-line?	No	Yes (blended)	No
Type of Activity	Classroom; OJT; Apprenticeship; Incumbent Worker	Classroom	Classroom; Incumbent Worker; Customized
Incumb./ Unemp/ Both	Unemployed	Unemployed	Both
Training Provider(s)	MPCC; WNCC; Chadron State; UNK	WNCC	MPCC; WNCC; Chadron State; UNK
Pre-requisites	Building/construction/electrical experience or two-year college degree in related field	High School Diploma/GED; Physical	Building/construction/electrical experience or two-year college degree in related field
Certificate/ License/ Credential	Certificate (small wind installer)	Certificate & OSHA General Card	Basic Certificate; Advanced Certificate
Total Hours	40	36 credit hours	16-24
Length of Time	1 week	1 year	1 week
# of Sessions	4	2	4
Enrollment Timeline	2 times per year	1 time per year	2 times per year
Trainees/Session	10	8	10
Total Trainees	38	16	40
Cost/Participant	$1,500	$3,116	$475
Total Training Cost	$54,154	$49,856	$19,000
Expected Wage/Hr	$14	$18	$14

	LEED	Weatherization	Energy Auditor
Energy Focus	Green Construction/Energy Efficiency	Green Construction/Energy Efficiency	Green Construction/Energy Efficiency
New or Existing	Existing	New	New
On-line?	Yes	No	No
Type of Activity	Classroom; Incumbent	Classroom	Classroom; Incumbent Worker
Incumb./ Unemp/ Both	Both	Both	Both
Training Provider(s)	AGC Building Chapter	MPCC; WNCC	MPCC; WNCC
Pre-requisites	Building/construction/electrical experience or two-year college degree in related field	Basic Reading and Math	Basic Reading and Math
Certificate/ License/ Credential	LEED Certified	Certificate	Certificate
Total Hours	16	40	40
Length of Time	2 days	1 week	1 week
# of Sessions	2	4	4
Enrollment Timeline	1 time per year	2 times per year	2 times per year
Trainees/Session	5	8	10
Total Trainees	10	32	40
Cost/Participant	$855	$285	$333
Total Training Cost	$8,550	$9,120	$13,320
Expected Wage/Hr	$18	$12	$14

	Boot Camps	Pre-Apprenticeships	Apprenticeships
Energy Focus	Wind/Green Construction/Energy Efficiency	Wind/Green Construction/Energy Efficiency	Wind/Green Construction/Energy Efficiency
New or Existing	New	Existing	Existing
On-line?	No	No	No
Type of Activity	Classroom	Classroom; OJT; Customized Training	Apprenticeship; OJT; Classroom
Incumb./ Unemp/ Both	Unemployed	Unemployed	Unemployed
Training Provider(s)	MPCC; WNCC	Steamfitters; IBEW	Steamfitters; IBEW
Pre-requisites	Basic Reading and Math	Boot Camp	High School Diploma/GED
Certificate/ License/ Credential	OSHA 10; First Aid, Lead Safe RRP; Intro to the Trades, Green Construction Basics	Certificate	Various (depending on the apprenticeship pursued): Welding/Rigging/Med-Gas/UA Star OSHA 30/CPR-Safety/Omaha Steam Iowa State Hydronic-HVAC-Elect.
Total Hours	80	96	247/year
Length of Time	2 weeks	1 year	varies depending on apprenticeship
# of Sessions	8	2	1
Enrollment Timeline	4 times per year	1 time per year	1 time per year
Trainees/Session	10	3	2
Total Trainees	80	6	2
Cost/Participant	$950	$3,714	$8,549
Total Training Cost	$76,000	$22,284	$17,098
Expected Wage/Hr	$10	$12	49% of Journeyman Scale

	Safety Trainings	Green Systems Awareness	Welding
Energy Focus	Wind; Bio-Fuels; Green Construction	Wind; Bio-Fuels; Green Construction	Wind (manufacturing); Green Construction
New or Existing	Existing	Existing	New/Existing
On-line?	Yes	No	No
Type of Activity	Classroom; Customized	Classroom	Classroom; Incumbent Worker
Incumb./ Unemp/ Both	Both	Both	Both
Training Provider(s)	Steamfitters; IBEW; MPCC; WNCC	Steamfitters	Steamfitters; MPCC; WNCC
Pre-requisites	Basic Reading and Math	Pre-Apprenticeship	minimal to advanced experience required depending on the level of training
Certificate/ License/ Credential	OSHA card; Certificate	Certificate	Certificate
Total Hours	16	30 hours	48--640
Length of Time	2 days	5 weeks	8--16 weeks
# of Sessions	4	2	4
Enrollment Timeline	2 times per year	1 time per year	2 times per year
Trainees/Session	8	5	12
Total Trainees	32	10	48
Cost/Participant	$285	$1,161	$1,900
Total Training Cost	$9,120	$11,610	$91,200
Expected Wage/Hr	$12	$16	$16

	Heat Pump (HVAC)	Work-Type Experiences	
Energy Focus	Energy Efficiency	Wind/Green Construction/Energy Efficiency	
New or Existing	New	New	
On-line?	No	No	
Type of Activity	Classroom	OJT, Internships, Work Experiences	
Incumb./ Unemp/ Both	Incumbent	Unemployed	
Training Provider(s)	MPCC; WNCC	MPCC; WNCC; local employers	
Pre-requisites	HVAC background	Basic Reading & Math	
Certificate/ License/ Credential	Certificate	none	
Total Hours	16	varies	
Length of Time	1 week	varies	
# of Sessions	2	20	
Enrollment Timeline	1 time per year	on-going	
Trainees/Session	10	1	
Total Trainees	20	20	
Cost/Participant	$950	$2,775	
Total Training Cost	$19,000	$55,500	
Expected Wage/Hr	$14	$12	

Western Training Opportunities

Unemployed and Incumbent Worker Budget and Enrollments

U = Unemployed Worker I = Incumbent Worker

A)	**Wind**				**54**	**$104,006**
	U worker	U cost	I worker	I cost		
	54	$104,006	0	$0		
B)	**Solar**				**40**	**$19,000**
	U worker	U cost	I worker	I cost		
	10	$4,750	30	$14,250		
C)	**LEED**				**10**	**$8,550**
	U worker	U cost	I worker	I cost		
	0	$0	10	$8,550		
D)	**Weatherization**				**32**	**$9,120**
	U worker	U cost	I worker	I cost		
	20	$5,700	12	$3,420		
E)	**Energy Auditor**				**40**	**$13,300**
	U worker	U cost	I worker	I cost		
	10	$3,330	30	$9,970		
F)	**Boot Camps**				**80**	**$76,000**
	U worker	U cost	I worker	I cost		
	80	$76,000	0	$0		
G)	**Pre-Apprenticeships**				**6**	**$22,281**
	U worker	U cost	I worker	I cost		
	6	$22,281	0	$0		

H)	**Apprenticeships**				**2**	**$17,098**
	U worker	U cost	I worker	I cost		
	2	$17,098	0	$0		
I)	**Safety Trainings**				**32**	**$9,120**
	U worker	U cost	I worker	I cost		
	20	$5,700	12	$3,420		
J)	**Green Systems Awareness**				**10**	**$11,609**
	U worker	U cost	I worker	I cost		
	0	$0	10	$11,609		
K)	**Welding**				**48**	**$91,200**
	U worker	U cost	I worker	I cost		
	30	$57,000	18	$34,200		
L)	**Heat Pump**				**20**	**$19,000**
	U worker	U cost	I worker	I cost		
	5	$4,750	15	$14,250		
M)	**Work-Type Experiences**				**20**	**$55,716**
	U worker	U cost	I worker	I cost		
	20	$55,716	0	$0		

c. Supportive Services

Supportive services may be provided to Western syNErgy participants who are unable to obtain such services from other providers in the community. These services may only be provided after it has been determined that such services are necessary to enable the participant to participate in syNErgy training or employment opportunities. Coordination between the syNErgy case manager and other partners, such as WIA, must take place to determine the availability of supportive services from sources other than the Western syNErgy project. To the greatest extent possible, syNErgy participants will be co-enrolled in programs that can leverage supportive service funds, such as WIA.

When supportive service funds cannot be leveraged, the syNErgy case manager will assess the participant's need for supportive services, document the results of the assessment, and document the provision of such services. Supportive services cost and time limitations will mirror those of the local WIA service provider; in some instances these limitations may be exceeded with the approval of the State syNErgy Program Coordinator. The cost limitation includes all supportive services provided during the participant's enrollment in syNErgy and those supportive services provided to the participant as part of follow up after exit. The cost of direct payment or reimbursement to clients for supportive services will be the actual costs incurred up to the maximum amount allowed. The cost of supportive services must be both reasonable and competitive in price. Assistance for allowable supportive services includes, but is not limited to:

- **Transportation**: Includes costs for items such as mileage reimbursement, basic car repairs, car liability insurance, bus, or other transportation fees.
- **Childcare**: May be provided by a licensed day care provider to clients who are not able to participate in syNErgy without such assistance.
- **Protective clothing, eyewear, tools, equipment**: These items may include eyewear, steel-toed shoes, work related or training related tools and equipment, uniforms, etc. If these items are required under the training program curriculum (included in the course syllabus), they become training costs, not supportive service costs.

- **License, Test and Application fees**: For the payment of such fees as they pertain to training or employment opportunities in the renewable energy field.

The Western syNErgy case manager will assist participants in finding linkages, referrals, and information about the availability of supportive service assistance not provided or funded by the Western syNErgy project. Such services may include: food stamps, temporary assistance for needy families (TANF), veteran's assistance funds, financial assistance for education, county public assistance funds, etc.

d. Performance, Placement & Retention

The Western syNErgy project relies on established partnerships with the local One-Stop Career Centers to meet the performance outcomes outlined below. The Western syNErgy project will partner with the Career Center's Wagner Peyser staff, most notably Business Service Representatives (BSRs), to utilize their employer contacts for possible job placement opportunities. The Western project will also utilize the Nebraska Department of Labor's new web-based Management Information System (MIS), NEworks. NEworks will allow for case management, participant tracking, resume development, job search and follow up services. By utilizing NEworks, syNErgy participants will have the ability to search and apply for numerous renewable energy employment opportunities either on their own, or with the assistance of their case manager. For retention, part of the "Intensive Case Management" service model is to continue services and contact with participants after they have completed training and obtained employment. This strategy allows for a greater success rate for participants who may not have immediate success in their new employment opportunities.

While the Western proposal does not include letters of commitment from local industry employers, the syNErgy Service Provider and Training Providers will continue to foster employer involvement throughout the life of this project. Employer incentives, such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), On the Job Trainings (wage reimbursement), Customized Trainings for employers with specific workforce needs, and student Internship opportunities will be marketed to potential employers.

The Western syNErgy project has an "Entered Employment" goal of 80% for Unemployed Workers; and an "Average Earnings" goal of $10 per hour for Unemployed

Workers, and $16 per hour for Incumbent Workers. There is no Entered Employment goal for Incumbent Workers because they are already employed in the construction or energy industry. The difference in Average Earnings goals for Incumbent Workers and Unemployed Workers is due to the fact that the Incumbent Workers will most likely be earning Experienced Level Wages when they start their syNErgy training, and will be poised to earn an even higher salary after their renewable energy training. Unemployed Workers will most likely start earning Entry Level Wages once they obtain employment in the renewable energy industry.

The Western region's Planned Performance Outcomes (see Attachment 2) are based on the percentage of syNErgy training funds the Western region received for the syNErgy project; $600,000 out of a statewide total of $2.6 million in training funds is 23%. Based on this percentage, the Western region is assuming responsibility for 23% of the Statewide Planned Performance Outcomes.

Expected service numbers are higher for Incumbent Workers than Unemployed Workers. This is due to the fact that the Western project is seeking to secure job retention of incumbent workers in need of upgrading their skills. Job creation is an important goal of the syNErgy project, however job retention and prevention of laid off workers is also an area that syNErgy can impact.

e. Sustainability Plan

Training opportunities for the Western syNErgy project were developed in coordination with local training providers. The Western syNErgy project has established agency and program partnerships that will exist beyond the life of the grant. Relationships between employers, training providers and program service providers will be maintained to assist new job seekers, students, etc. The Western syNErgy project focuses on developing a highly skilled workforce with the knowledge and abilities to utilize their skills in renewable energy sector, most notably wind production and manufacturing.

Section 3: Organizational Structure

The Western syNErgy project will be housed out of the One-Stop Career Center in North Platte. The Western project will have one Full Time Equivalent (FTE), or "case manager" position for syNErgy. The syNErgy case manager will travel, as needed, throughout the Western

region, including McCook, Lexington and Scottsbluff. The case manager will operate out of the local One-Stop Career Centers, work with local training providers and employers, and serve syNErgy participants. In addition to the 1 FTE that the Western region will hire to implement the syNErgy project, the Western area will have an assigned syNErgy State Program Coordinator to provide technical assistance and act as the administrative entity for the Western project. The syNErgy State Program Coordinator will not be funded through the Western region's $600,000.

The syNErgy case manager will mirror the case management strategies of the local WIA program. Training and technical assistance regarding syNErgy enrollment procedures and other syNErgy requirements will be provided to the syNErgy case manager. The case manager will be hired through Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL). The syNErgy case manager will be an employee of NDOL, and will follow the organizational structure of their hiring agency.

Due to the high number of individuals that will be served through this project, the syNErgy case manager will be responsible for the case management of Unemployed Workers. The syNErgy State Program Coordinator will be responsible for the Incumbent Worker population. As such, the duties and services that case managers will provide to syNErgy participants not receiving "Incumbent Worker" training include, but are not limited to:

Outreach; Recruitment; Basic Skills Assessment (reading, math, etc.); Technical Skills Assessment; Interest Area Assessment; Individual Employment Plan development; Outline Training Opportunities; Coordinate Training enrollment; Process Training Expenses; Coordinate enrollment with partner programs; Leverage partner resources for client expenses; Eligibility determination; Enrollment documentation, paperwork, verification; Career Guidance; Job Search; Job Placement; OJT development & coordination (contracts, wage reimbursement, etc.); Participant Tracking (NEworks)

In order to perform these duties, the syNErgy case manager must possess the following skills:

Multi-tasking; writing; critical thinking; Microsoft Office Suite; web-based operations; interpersonal skills; strong communication; marketing; experience or education in the Human Service or related field; in addition to skills required by the hiring agency

The primary Administrative contact for the Western syNErgy project is:

Oscar Duran

syNErgy Program Coordinator

oscar.duran@nebraska.gov

(402) 471-9305

Section 4: Budget Narrative

The Western detailed budget, outlined below, includes the estimated program costs for the syNErgy project, including case manager costs, participant training costs and participant supportive services costs.

Supportive services costs were estimated based on 5% of the original training cost for each training opportunity. A primary goal of the Western project is to provide as many funds as possible for participant costs. For this reason, the Western team has not projected material costs for the implementation of this project.

Leveraged fund sources include but are not limited to:

Local WIA programs—eligible participants will be co-enrolled to maximize job training resources

Nebraska Energy Office: Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)—working with local Community Action programs to implement this program

One-Stop Career Center services—marketing, outreach and recruitment strategies will be implemented by Career Center staff that already perform these duties

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program—eligible participants will be co-enrolled to maximize job training resources

USDA-DOE Rural Economic Development Energy Efficiency effort— direct linkage and contact with potential employers will assist with recruitment and outreach opportunities

Western Detailed Budget

Case Manager Wages (1FTE)		$32,084
Retirement, FICA, Health		$10,588
Travel		$2,515
Indirect Costs		$4,813
Operational Costs		$10,000
Total Personnel Cost Per Year		$60,000
2 year cost for Case Manager		**$120,000**
Training Cost-Unemployed		$356,331
	Clients Served	*257*
Training Cost-Incumbent		$99,669
	Clients Served	*137*
Supportive Services Costs		$24,000
	Total Training Costs	**$480,000**
	Total syNErgy Costs	**$600,000**
	Total Clients Served	**394**

Attachment 1: List of Western Training Opportunities

A)	**Wind**		**54**	**$104,006**
	1	Small Wind Technician		
	2	Wind Turbine Technician		
B)	**Solar**		**40**	**$19,000**
	3	Solar Thermal (Basic)		
	4	Solar Thermal (Advanced)		
	5	Solar Air Heating		
	6	Solar Hot Water		
C)	**LEED**		**10**	**$8,550**
	7	LEED Green Associate Test Prep		
	8	LEED for New Construction		
D)	**Weatherization**		**32**	**$9,120**
	9	Retrofit Technician/Weatherization		
E)	**Energy Auditor**		**40**	**$13,300**
	10	Home Energy Rater		
	11	BPI Building Analyst/Energy Auditor Cert.		
	12	Certified Residential Energy Auditor		
F)	**Boot Camps**		**80**	**$76,000**
	13	Basic Skills Boot Camp		
	14	syNErgy Boot Camp		
G)	**Pre-Apprenticeships**		**6**	**$22,281**
	15	Steamfitters & Plumbers Local 464		
	16	IBEW (Electrical Workers union)		

H)	**Apprenticeships**		**2**	**$17,098**
	17	Pipefitter Apprenticeship		
	18	Plumber Apprenticeship		
	19	Electrician Apprenticeship		
I)	**Safety Trainings**		**32**	**$9,120**
	20	Elevated Work/Harness Safety		
	21	30 Hour OSHA		
	22	Use and Care of Tools		
J)	**Green Systems Awareness**		**10**	**$11,609**
	23	Green Systems Awareness		
K)	**Welding**		**48**	**$91,200**
	24	16 Week Weld Program (Local 464)		
	25	Welding Certification (Local 464)		
L)	**Heat Pump**		**20**	**$19,000**
	26	Heat Pump Training		
M)	**Work-Type Experiences**		**20**	**$55,716**
	27	Paid Internships		
	28	Work Experiences		
	29	On the Job Trainings		

Attachment 2: Western Planned syNErgy Performance Outcomes

		Statewide			Western Region			
	Participant Outcomes	**Incumbent Workers**	**Unemployed Workers**	**Totals**	**Incumbent Workers**	**Unemployed Workers**	**Totals**	
1	Served	350	600	950	81	138	219	*23% of Statewide Numbers*
2	Beginning Education/Training Activities	350	517	867	81	119	200	*86% of #1*
3	Completing Education/Training Activities (85%)	298	439	737	69	102	171	*85% of #2*
4	Completing Education/Training Activities & Receiving Degree/Certificate (80 %)	238	351	589	56	82	138	*80% of #3*
5	Completing Education/Training Activities Placed Into Unsubsidized Employment (80 %)	Continued	351	351 +	Continued (b/c already employed)	82	82+	*80% of #3*
6	Completing Education/Training Activities & Placed Into Training Related Unsubsidized Employment (75 %)	Continued	329	329 +	Continued (b/c already employed)	77	77+	*75% of #3*
7	Placed In Unsubsidized Employment & Retain Employed Status 1st/2nd Quarters Following Initial Placement (90%)	Continued	315	315 +	Continued (b/c already employed)	74	74+	*90% of #5*